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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

Monterey, California



THESIS

AN EXAMINATION OF RECRUIT ATTRITION IN
THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

by

Charles Ross Carrigan
and
Joseph Henric Franz

December, 1982

Thesis Advisor:

R. S. Elster

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM	
1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO. A127401	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER	
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) An Examination of Recruit Attrition in the United States Marine Corps		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Master's Thesis; December 1982	6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR(s) Charles Ross Carrigan Joseph Henric Franz		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)	
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93940		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS	
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93940		12. REPORT DATE December 1982	13. NUMBER OF PAGES 85
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) Unclassified	
		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE	
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.			
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)			
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES			
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Recruit training, recruit attrition, recruiting, attrition.			
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Since 1979, the rate of recruit attrition in the United States Marine Corps has continued to increase. This increase in recruit attrition is costly in terms of both time and money. The purpose of this thesis is threefold. First, it provides a general overview of the Marine Corps recruiting and training process. Second, it attempts to compare recruit attrition statistics between the two recruit depots. And third, it			

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As a result of the study, the authors present recommendations for future recruit attrition studies; a recommendation for the development of uniform definitions and reporting formats for the recruit depots; and finally, a recommendation that Congressional legislation be implemented which would allow military recruiters access to school and police records of potential recruits.

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An Examination of Recruit Attrition in
the United States Marine Corps

by

Charles Ross Carrigan
Captain, United States Marine Corps
B.S., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 1971

and

Joseph Henric Franz
Captain, United States Marine Corps
B.S., Auburn University, 1976

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
December, 1982

Authors:

CR Carrigan

Joseph H Franz

Approved by:

Richard L. Elster

Thesis Advisor

J. Muller

Second Reader

James H. Wood

Chairman, Department of Administrative Sciences

W. M. Wood

Dean of Information and Policy Sciences

ABSTRACT

Since 1979, the rate of recruit attrition in the United States Marine Corps has continued to increase. This increase in recruit attrition is costly in terms of both time and money.

The purpose of this thesis is threefold. First, it provides a general overview of the Marine Corps recruiting and training process. Second, it attempts to compare recruit attrition statistics between the two recruit depots. And third, it attempts to construct a profile of Senior Drill Instructors with low attrition rates and Senior Drill Instructors with high attrition rates.

As a result of the study, the authors present recommendations for future recruit attrition studies; a recommendation for the development of uniform definitions and reporting formats for the recruit depots; and finally, a recommendation that Congressional legislation be implemented which would allow military recruiters access to school and police records of potential recruits.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors wish to thank Professor R. S. Elster and Lieutenant Colonel J. F. Mullane for their constructive criticism and timely review.

Any study on Marine Corps recruit attrition could not be accomplished without the assistance of personnel at the Marine Corps Recruit Depots. While all the Depot personnel we encountered were both open and extremely helpful, we would like to extend a special thanks to Colonel E. S. Piper, Lieutenant Colonel J. H. Van Dyne and Captain T. J. Hesketh at MCRD, Parris Island, and Lieutenant Colonel R. E. Dennis, Lieutenant Colonel G. S. Ford, Major F. G. Duggan and Major C. R. McGill at MCRD, San Diego. Their professional attitude was of immeasurable assistance.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

On 31 December 1972, the United States Government ceased the involuntary induction of males into the nation's Armed Forces. This radical shift in government policy provided both a challenge and an opportunity for the military services to enlist and retain qualified volunteers. While the Marine Corps had always predominantly relied on volunteers to fill its ranks, it was now required to rely solely on volunteers and to compete with the other military services for those volunteers.

Though the Marine Corps Recruiting Service has always responded to this challenge of attracting and enlisting volunteers, it will be severely tested in future years. According to demographic prognostications, the pool of personnel eligible for recruitment into the Armed Forces will have declined from 2.1 million in 1980 to 1.7 million in 1990 [Ref. 1: p. 34]. Such a precipitous decline will present the Marine Corps with serious challenges for not only recruiting volunteers, but also for maintaining Marine Corps standards of quality.

But recruitment is only part of the task which confronts the Marine Corps. From fiscal year 1979 to fiscal year 1981, recruit attrition for all recruits sent to the two recruit depots increased from 11.8% to 15.4% [Ref. 2: p. 5]. This

rising attrition rate, coupled with future demographic trends, is the impetus and the basis for this study.

B. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objective of this thesis is to examine recruit attrition in the United States Marine Corps. We have defined recruit attrition as the failure of a recruit (a volunteer who has been sent to a recruit depot for training) to either commence or having begun, to graduate from recruit training.

This analysis will be limited to the attrition of male recruits at both Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD), Parris Island, and MCRD, San Diego. The study will not attempt to evaluate attrition beyond recruit training, either in the career force or among first-term enlistees. We will not concentrate on the effect of demographic variables (age, education, etc.). We feel that this area has been covered in detail in previous studies and that additional analysis would only restate the obvious.

It is our intent that this thesis provide a general background for those Marines who have never been directly involved in the recruiting or training of Marine recruits. Our primary analysis will be directed at differing attrition rates between the recruit depots and developing a profile of Senior Drill Instructors with high attrition platoons and Senior Drill Instructors with low attrition platoons.

C. METHODOLOGY

In order to obtain current data and background, visits were made to both Marine Corps Recruit Depots. Data and information were collected through personal interviews of Depot personnel directly involved with the recruiting and training of recruits and through a review of current policies, procedures, and regulations. Additional data was derived from personal observation of the training process and from thorough analysis of the recruit graduation packages.

D. SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The initial chapter of this thesis provides an overview of previous research conducted in the area of recruit attrition. To provide a thorough basis for this study, Chapters III and IV will describe the recruiting and training process by which volunteers are accessed into the regular Marine Corps establishment.

Chapter V will provide a compilation of data collected by the authors and an analysis of that data. Chapter VI will provide conclusions to this odyssey and offer recommendations and observations derived from this analysis.

II. SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

A. INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of the All Volunteer Force (AVF) in 1973, the United States Marine Corps, as well as the other branches of the Armed Forces, was required to attract, enlist, and retain qualified volunteers for military service. Having to rely strictly on a costly volunteer force (in terms of recruitment costs), it was incumbent upon the Marine Corps to retain as many of these volunteers as possible without a commensurate loss in quality. Since 1973, the achievement of this dual objective of quantity and quality has been addressed in a number of research studies.

Four of these studies are reviewed in depth in this chapter. The first study was conducted by personnel of the Center for Naval Analysis and addresses demographic variables. The second study was conducted by First Marine Corps District personnel and places primary emphasis on additional demographic and organizational variables. The third study reviewed was conducted at MCRD, Parris Island, and deals not only with demographic variables but analyzes pre-recruit training intentions and expectations. Finally, a study conducted at MCRD, San Diego, deals with the effect of the training unit environment on recruit attrition. As indicated, each of these studies addresses different variables which may play a role in the success or failure of a recruit.

B. CENTER FOR NAVAL ANALYSIS STUDY

In Profile of a Successful Marine, W. H. Sims of the Center for Naval Analysis endeavored to develop a profile of a successful Marine as a tool to be utilized by the Marine Corps Recruiting Service. The objective of this profile was to assist recruiters in selecting out potentially unsuccessful recruits. Sims' analysis considered only applicant information--age, race, educational level, number of dependents, and aptitude and attitudinal test scores--that is readily available to Marine recruiters.

The analysis revealed that the most successful Marines are usually, but not always, those who have completed high school, enlisted at an early age, and scored high on the ASVAB mental group composite or the ASVAB attrition composite. Non-high school graduates who have scored high on either the ASVAB mental group composite or the ASVAB attrition composite and who have enlisted at an early age also tend to be successful.

On the question of race, Sims' analysis also found that once the educational level, mental aptitude, and age of a recruit have been determined, both minority and majority racial groups have identical chances of success. His analysis also determined that the presence or absence of dependents was statistically significant, but of little practical significance.

Sims concluded that attempts at the recruiting level to screen out potentially unsuccessful recruits based on this

demographic profile would probably result in increased recruiting effort, with a resultant increase in cost. As an example, he estimated that each 1-percent reduction in attrition would result in a 2-percent reduction in the population available as potential recruits.

It was interesting to note that the analysis predicted that attrition could be reduced by 4 percent if information regarding arrest records, school expulsions, and family stability were available to recruiters. [Ref. 3]

C. FIRST MARINE CORPS DISTRICT STUDY

In a study conducted by the First Marine Corps District in Calendar Year (CY) 1981-82, an attempt was made to examine fifteen separate variables, ranging from age to education level, as factors in recruit attrition. The primary emphasis in this study was on the variables of height/weight ratio, time in pool*, and program variables.

This research concluded that recruits who fall within 10% of the maximum weight allowed by current Marine Corps orders also attrite at a significantly higher rate than those that fall within an 80% weight grouping** or within

*Time in pool may be defined as the total amount of time (expressed in days) which a recruit spends in the Delayed Entry Program prior to being transferred to a recruit depot for training.

**An 80% weight grouping may be defined as recruits who are not in the category of being within 10% of the maximum weight allowance or within 10% of the minimum weight allowance.

10% of the minimum weight requirement. The research also indicated that recruits who spend less than thirty days in the Delayed Enlistment Program attrite at a much higher rate than those who remain in the pool for a longer period of time. Additionally, those recruits with a guaranteed enlistment program graduate from recruit training at a significantly higher rate than those on a general enlistment.

The primary conclusions derived in this study should not be surprising. Because of the rigorous physical fitness program encountered by recruits during training, recruits who report to training overweight begin training with a serious handicap. In addition, it would seem that those recruits who are in a guaranteed enlistment program are normally the higher mental groups and education levels, and thus, as previous studies indicate, are more likely to complete recruit training.

Finally, this study confirmed earlier findings of other researchers that the older the recruit, the higher the rate of attrition, and the lower the education level and mental group*, the higher attrition rate. [Ref. 4]

*Mental group is a classification of mental competence determined by the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) tests.

D. MCRD, PARRIS ISLAND STUDY

In a study conducted by researchers at the University of South Carolina, recruit attrition was analyzed among a sample of 1521 first term, male, non-reservist enlisted personnel at MCRD, Parris Island, South Carolina. In this study, the researchers looked at not only demographic variables, but also at pre-recruit training intentions, expectations, and attraction to civilian and military roles.

As previously confirmed by other researchers, the recruits who successfully complete recruit training have significantly higher education levels and significantly higher mental scores than those who do not complete recruit training. The significance of this study lies in the analysis of recruit intentions and expectations. This analysis strongly suggests that recruits who successfully complete recruit training have a significantly higher pre-recruit training intention to complete and a significantly lower expectancy of being able to obtain acceptable civilian employment.

The analysis also determined that recruits who graduate from recruit training also differ from nongraduates with respect to role attraction and expected organizational variables. Graduates see the Marine Corps role as more attractive; expect a more structured leadership style; expect more skill variety, task significance, and feedback; expect to be part of a proficient work group; expect to be more satisfied; and have higher internal motivation than do nongraduates.

The researchers conclude that recruiters could favorably influence recruit attrition by presenting accurate expectations of the Marine Corps and recruit training. With accurate expectations of recruit training, recruits may become better risks by adjusting their expectations and by increasing their confidence that they can, in fact, complete recruit training. [Ref. 5]

E. MCRD, SAN DIEGO STUDY

In a study conducted at MCRD, San Diego, researchers discovered that attrition varied from 0% to 28% across different platoons. In addition, the researchers found that recruit attrition rates varied not only among platoons, but varied significantly among battalions within the Recruit Training Regiment. Armed with this information, the researchers place primary emphasis on analysis of the training unit environment and its impact on recruit attrition.

In studying the effects of the training unit environment on recruit attrition, the researchers determined that: (1) the large differences among platoons in recruit attrition was not wholly attributable to recruit demographic factors or to pre-recruit training expectations; and, (2) that platoons with high attrition rates do not attain higher performance levels than do platoons with low attrition rates. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that the environment of training units is a key determinant of recruit attrition.

In pursuing the question of the impact of the training environment, the researchers identify (correctly, we think) the drill instructor as a central factor in influencing recruit attrition. The researchers suggest that drill instructors whose platoons differ in recruit attrition rates also differ in attitudes and expectations. Drill instructors whose platoons have low attrition rates believe that the attitudes of drill instructors influence attrition rates. These same drill instructors also have more confidence that their recruits would remain in training even if given the opportunity to leave. Conversely, drill instructors whose platoons experience high attrition rates have much weaker convictions about both the influence of drill instructors' attitudes on recruits and the motivation of recruits to become Marines.

Thus, the researchers concluded that the drill instructors' level of self-confidence and sense of personal responsibility in training recruits is communicated to his recruits and influences the recruit's level of self-confidence, commitment, and motivation to successfully complete recruit training.
[Ref. 6]

F. SUMMARY

The research efforts reviewed in this chapter have concentrated primarily on identifying demographic and psychological factors which would assist the Marine Corps in screening recruits. The results in the first three studies are not

surprising. It would seem logical that the demographic variables and psychological attributes discussed in these studies play a role in a recruit's success in recruit training.

But, the authors of this thesis contend, as do the researchers in the San Diego study, that recruit attrition is also influenced by the training environment as established by and through the drill instructor. In this study, we intend to pursue the idea of the influence of the drill instructor on recruit attrition and to attempt to develop a profile of Senior Drill Instructors with high attrition platoons and Senior Drill Instructors with low attrition platoons. In addition, we will also look at external influences which affect attrition rates.

III. THE MARINE CORPS RECRUITING PROCESS

A. INTRODUCTION

In 1775, at Tun's Tavern in Philadelphia, the first Marine Corps recruiter attempted to enlist volunteers in the United States Marine Corps. Since that historic moment, the recruiting effort has expanded to a fulltime force of over five thousand Marines and civilian support personnel at an annual cost of approximately \$110 million per year [Ref. 7: p. 5].

Throughout its history, the United States Marine Corps has prided itself not only on its primary reliance on volunteers, but also the quality of those same volunteers. To ensure that the quality of volunteers, as well as the necessary quantity, is maintained, the Marine Corps recruiting process utilizes three major points of quality control through which a volunteer must pass before entering the recruit training process. This chapter will be devoted to a discussion of that quality control process and procedures.

B. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE RECRUITING SERVICE

In 1976, the Marine Corps Recruiting Service was reorganized so that Marine Corps recruiting and recruit training could be integrated to provide better quality control of recruit input. Under the revised organization (shown in Figure 3.1), operational control of the recruiting district is under the control

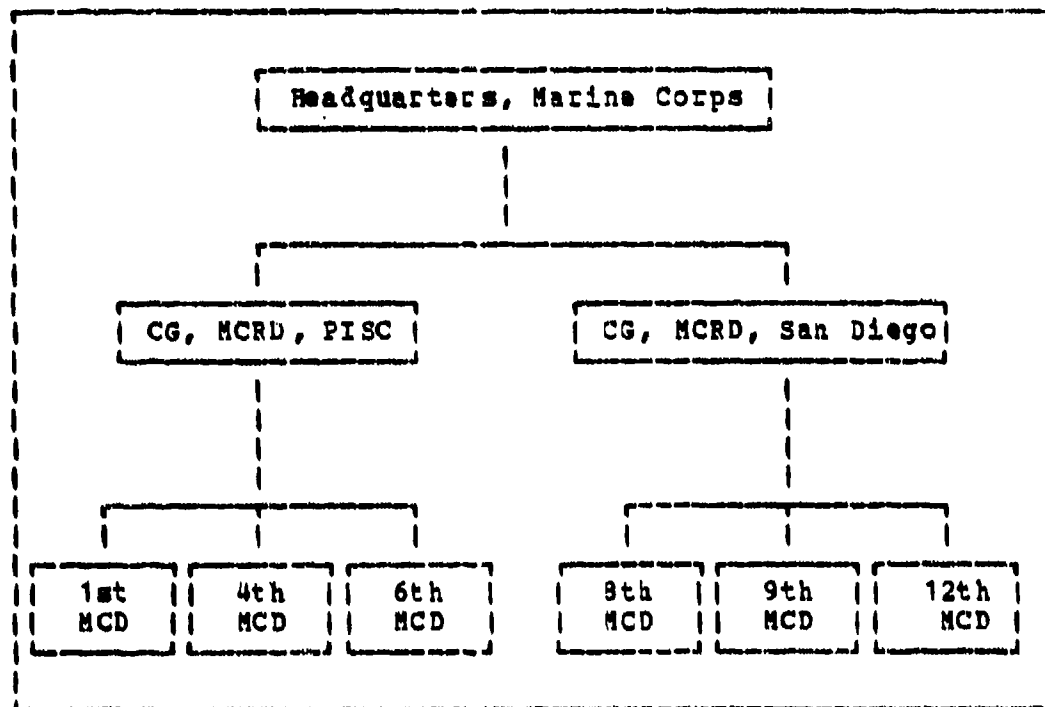


Figure 3.1 Organization of the Marine Corps Recruiting Service.

of the appropriate recruit depot, while administrative control of the district is controlled by Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC).

Within each Marine Corps District (MCD) are Recruiting Stations (RS) and Recruiting Substations (RSS). A Recruiting Substation is the base level from which the Marine recruiter operates.

C. THE MARINE RECRUITER

The key individual involved in the recruitment process is the Marine Corps recruiter. It is through this Marine

that volunteers are accessed into the United States Marine Corps. The task of the recruiter is twofold. First, he must endeavor to attract young men to the recruiting office and to persuade them to enlist in the Marine Corps. This portion of the recruiting process is conducted with the aid of very sophisticated sales techniques. Once a prospective applicant has indicated a desire to join the Marine Corps, the recruiter must ascertain the qualifications of the applicant for enlistment. This is the first element of quality control, and represents the initial effort to identify applicants who would be disqualified from military service because of current Marine Corps standards, or who, in the judgment of the recruiter, would attrite from recruit training.

Enlistment standards for applicants are established by MCO P1100.74A, Military Personnel Procurement Manual [Ref. 8]. These standards govern the entire quality control process and provide the basis for which applicants may be disqualified prior to and after enlistment. Thus, the guidelines established within this manual are used by the recruiter in determining an applicant's qualification for enlistment. The remainder of this section will be devoted to a synopsis of those standards and the role of the recruiter in implementing them.

The recruiter commences this process by a thorough interview of the prospective applicant. This interview serves a dual purpose. First, information is obtained in order to

determine the applicant's basic eligibility for enlistment. Second, the recruiter attempts to uncover any area of the applicant's background or qualifications which would result in a fraudulent or erroneous enlistment. The recruiter is especially alert to the following information which may have been deliberately or erroneously omitted by the applicant:

1. Involvement with law enforcement officials including juvenile offenses.
2. Prior service.
3. Medical/psychological defects.
4. Dependents.
5. Concealment of correct age.
6. Alcohol or drug abuse.
7. Education level.

During this interview, the recruiter advises the applicant of the penalties for withholding information which would result in a fraudulent or erroneous enlistment and that the applicant will be subject to an Entrance National Agency Check (ENTNAC) for nonprior service personnel or a National Agency Check (NAC) for prior service personnel. Upon completion of the interview, the recruiter must then commence the task of verifying the applicant's information.

The recruiter attempts to verify key elements of the information provided by the applicant. These elements are:

1. Age.
2. Citizenship.
3. Physical qualifications.

4. Educational requirements.
5. Dependents.
6. Moral character.

Each of these elements will be explored in detail, both as to the Marine Corps requirements or limitations, and as to the verification procedures required to be performed by the recruiter. The first area to be reviewed is age.

1. Age Requirements

The acceptable age for enlistment of an applicant who requires recruit training is not less than 17 but less than 29 years of age. Applicants who are 17 years old require parental consent for enlistment. The Commanding Generals of the Marine Corps Recruit Depots may waive the maximum age limitation when it can be determined that the applicant can satisfactorily complete recruit training and participate in the physical rigors associated with service in the Marine Corps.

The correct age for all applicants may be verified by inspection of one of the following types of evidence and will be accepted unless fraud is suspected.

1. Certificate of birth.
2. Age as given on passports.
3. Official transcript of the records of either the State, County or City Department of Public Health or Bureau of Vital Statistics, showing the date of birth.
4. Sworn affidavit of parents or guardian when supported by one of the following:

1. A transcript of records of the grammar school the applicant attended, showing the date of birth of the applicant.
2. A transcript of records of the hospital in which the applicant was born, showing the date of birth of the applicant.

Each applicant under 18 years of age, prior to physical examination for enlistment, will be required to have the written consent of parents or guardian. This consent may be given by:

1. Both parents, if living and not legally separated.
2. The surviving parent if one parent is deceased.
3. The custodial parent if the parents are legally separated.
4. The legally appointed guardian if both parents are deceased, or if the parents were legally separated and the custody of the applicant was awarded to a person other than one of the parents.

Applicants who know that they cannot secure the consent of their parents or guardian may claim that they have no living parents or legally appointed guardian. In order to verify this claim, the recruiter can require that the applicant provide one of the following:

1. A transcript of the death certificate of the individual's parents.
2. A statement from the judge or the clerk of the city or state court in whose jurisdiction the applicant resides to the effect that the applicant's parents are deceased or, if living, their whereabouts are unknown and the applicant has no legally appointed guardian.

2. Citizenship

An applicant for enlistment must be:

1. A citizen of the United States; or
2. An alien who has entered the United States on a permanent residence visa, established a bona fide residence, and has a home of record in the United States.

In the case of aliens, if the recruiter has reason to question the authenticity of the alien's documents, he should contact the nearest Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) office for document verification.

3. Physical Qualifications

Although the primary examination of an applicant's physical qualifications is conducted at the Military Enlistment Processing Station (MEPS), it is incumbent on the recruiter to provide a pre-MEPS physical screening of the applicant.

The recruiter will actually measure the applicant's weight and height. In addition, the recruiter will question the applicant as to his physical condition and attempt to identify any physical disabilities which would disqualify the applicant from military service. The recruiter will also advise the applicant of any necessary medical documentation pertaining to previous surgery or other corrective medical treatments required by the MEPS.

4. Educational Standards

The minimum education standard for enlistment in the Marine Corps is attendance through the tenth (10th) grade.

Applicants in this category are required to provide the recruiter with original official correspondence from the school attended, certifying the level of education attained, or a properly authenticated copy of the individual's high school transcript.

Applicants who attended high school through the twelfth grade and present either a letter so certifying, a high school diploma, or a certificate of attendance or completion, will be accessed as high school graduates. Applicants who can provide documentation demonstrating successful completion of a high school correspondence home study course accredited by the National Home Study Council will also be accessed as high school graduates. Finally, nonhigh school graduates who have completed 1 or more years of college-level work, regardless of level of high school, will be considered as high school graduates.

Applicants who possess General Education Development (GED) certificates will be accessed as nonhigh school graduates.

In each of these cases, the recruiter will require the applicant to present a diploma, transcript, certificate, or official school correspondence attesting to the level of education obtained by the applicant.

5. Dependents

For enlistment purposes, the Marine Corps defines a dependent as:

1. A spouse, to include a common law spouse if the state recognizes such.
2. Any unmarried natural child(ren), to include the following categories: stepchild(ren); adopted child(ren); legitimate or illegitimate child(ren), regardless of who has custody of the child(ren).
3. The applicant's parent(s), including stepparent(s), or parent(s) by adoption, and any person, including a former stepparent(s), who has stood loco parentis to the applicant at any time for a continuous period of at least five years before the applicant became 21 years of age.
4. Any other person who is in fact dependent on the applicant for over half of his or her support.

Applicants whose only dependent is a spouse do not require a dependent waiver. Waivers are required in the following circumstances:

1. Applicants who have a dependent in addition to or other than a spouse require a waiver from the commanding general of the appropriate recruit depot.
2. Applicants who have dependents other than a spouse that are legally separated or in the midst of divorce proceedings require a waiver from the commanding general of the appropriate recruit depot.
3. A divorced applicant who has no dependents may be processed without a waiver when any dependent child(ren) have been placed in the custody of the other parent by court order, and the applicant is not required to provide child support.
4. Where a divorced applicant is required to provide child support, a waiver will be required from the commanding general of the appropriate recruit depot.

The recruiter will verify the applicant's dependent status by obtaining certified copies of the following documents, as appropriate:

1. Marriage certificate.
2. Divorce decree(s).
3. Any court orders or documents pertaining to the applicant's dependent status.
4. Birth certificates of all children.
5. Adoption decrees.
6. Moral Character

The term "moral character" is very loosely defined. However, in this section, various categories which would indicate a poor moral character of the applicant will be identified. These are the categories which the recruiter should attempt to identify in examining the information supplied by the applicant.

1. Applicants convicted of a felony offense or who have received an adverse juvenile adjudication will not be enlisted without an approved waiver from the commanding general of the appropriate recruit depot.
2. Applicants against whom charges are pending will not be granted a waiver.
3. Applicants who are under civil restraint or otherwise serving a sentence will not be granted a waiver.
4. Applicants who are requesting enlistment as an alternative to judicial proceedings will not be granted a waiver.
5. Applicants who have an active or chronic venereal disease will not be granted a waiver.
6. Applicants who admit to participation in homosexual act(s) or who possess homosexual tendencies will not be granted a waiver.
7. Applicants who have abused alcohol or drugs require various waivers depending on the substance used and the extent of the usage.

D. THE MILITARY ENLISTMENT PROCESSING STATION (MEPS)

The second element of quality control is provided by personnel of the Military Enlistment Processing Station. The primary mission of the MEPS is "to examine applicants to determine their medical and physical qualifications for enlistment in the U.S. Armed Forces in accordance with eligibility standards established by the service concerned, and enlist in the Armed Forces those applicants accepted for enlistment by the sponsoring service" [Ref. 9: p. 4-9]. The physical and mental examination required of all recruits is self-explanatory and will not be further examined in this thesis. Suffice it to say, that recruits whose physical or mental condition renders them unsuitable for military service are identified here, and subsequently rejected for military service.

In addition to the examination for physical and mental fitness performed by MEPS personnel, two other additional screening procedures are utilized at the MEPS. First, the Marine liaison interviews the recruit and reviews the recruitment forms prepared by the recruiter on the particular recruit and forwarded to the MEPS. This procedure again attempts to determine if any information provided by the recruit to the recruiter is fraudulent or erroneous. Second, the MEPS personnel process the Entrance National Agency Check (ENTNAC) for nonprior service recruits or the National Agency Check (NAC) for prior service personnel. The ENTNAC or NAC is a background investigation initiated by the Defense Investigative

Agency (DIA) whereby FBI files and FBI identification agencies, as well as other national or local agencies, are checked for derogatory information on the designated individual. The purpose of the background investigation is to assist in determining if all information critical to qualification for enlistment has been disclosed. It should be noted that the ENTNAC or NAC is only initiated at the MEPS. The background investigation may not be completed even prior to the graduation of the recruit from recruit training. The absence of immediate feedback from these investigations leads us to the final stage of recruiting quality control prior to the commencement of recruit training--the Recruit Liaison Section.

Once an applicant has been sworn as a member of the United States Marine Corps, he is no longer an applicant, but a recruit. In subsequent sections, the term recruit, rather than applicant, will be used.

H. RECRUIT LIAISON SECTION (RLS)

Once a recruit has successfully passed the screening process of the recruiter and the MEPS, he is assigned to a recruit depot for training. When the recruit arrives at the recruit depot, he is not immediately thrust into training. For approximately 3-4 days, the recruit is processed into the Marine Corps. It is at this juncture that the final pre-training quality control screening occurs within the RLS established at each recruit depot.

A primary purpose of the RLS is to detect a defective recruit enlistment before the recruit enters the training cycle. This screening process begins with the identification of possible enlistment problems at an event known as the Moment of Truth (MOT). At this MOT, a final attempt is made to identify enlistment problems in the following areas:

1. Police involvement including juvenile records.
2. Prior service.
3. Age.
4. Education.
5. Dependents.
6. Alcohol or drug abuse.
7. Medical problems.

The intent here is to challenge the recruit to provide information (in these areas) which he may have previously omitted, concealed or erroneously provided to the recruiter or the MEPS personnel.

This procedure is not designed to substitute for either the recruiter or MEPS screening process. However, it does present an opportunity for a recruit, who has not had an initial exposure to the Marine Corps, to clear his record prior to entering training. The procedures outlined below are general procedures which may vary between the recruit depots. However, this discussion provides the reader with a good overview of the RLS process.

If a recruit identifies himself as a possible fraudulent or erroneous enlistment during the MOT process, he will be subsequently interviewed by RLS personnel. During this interview, the recruit's record will be reviewed and the recruit will be thoroughly questioned. At the conclusion of the interview, disposition of the recruit's enlistment defect may occur as follows:

1. No defect or defect already waived. In this case, a recruit may identify himself to the interviewer as a possible fraudulent or erroneous enlistment, when, in fact, he is not, or the defect has already been waived prior to the recruit reporting to the recruit depot.
2. Medical defect only. If a recruit discloses a possible medical defect only, he will be referred to a medical officer for disposition.
3. Use of cannabis. When a recruit admits to the use of cannabis no more than 10 times, no waiver is required. An entry is made in the recruit's Service Record Book (SRB) and the recruit will enter the training cycle.
4. Other enlistment defects. If a recruit discloses other possible defects which could result in a fraudulent or erroneous enlistment, the recruit will be interviewed by a Staff NonCommissioned Officer (SNCO).

During the SNCO interview, the possible defect will be documented and the recruit will be further questioned. If the defect is regarded as serious (age, felony conviction, extensive drug abuse, etc.), or a discharge is recommended, the recruit is referred to an officer for further inquiry and recommended disposition action.

The recruit will remain in the forming stage until final disposition of his case. For serious defects, the final disposition of the case may be referred to either the

Commanding General of the Recruit Depot or the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC). The following defects may be waived by the Commanding General:

1. Conviction or adverse juvenile adjudication of felony and/or misdemeanor.
2. Drug abuse.
3. Conviction of possession of cannabis.
4. Dependents.
5. Age.
6. Disqualifying prior service code.

The following enlistment defects require a waiver from CMC:

1. Conviction of possession of drugs other than cannabis.
2. Drug trafficking.
3. Alien.
4. Pending legal action.
5. Current probation status.
6. Enlistment as an alternative to judicial action.
7. Education.

The identification of enlistment defects alone does not necessarily result in discharge. The waiver process allows the Marine Corps to review the potential of each recruit to become a productive Marine based on the "whole man" concept. If a waiver at the appropriate level is granted, the recruit will continue into recruit training, which is the subject of the next chapter.

IV. RECRUIT TRAINING

A. INTRODUCTION

Upon completion of the forming cycle, the recruit is ready to begin training. Marine Corps recruit training is a dynamic process designed to transform a civilian-oriented recruit into a basic Marine. Aside from being time-consuming, the training of a recruit is expensive. The current cost estimate of training one recruit is \$5700 [Ref. 10: p. 5]. When one considers that the annual throughput is approximately 50,000 recruits, it is easy to understand the concern caused by current attrition statistics.

The goal of Marine Corps recruit training is to produce a Marine who can function effectively in garrison, is trained in the service rifle, in rudimentary field and combat skills and who practices those personal and professional traits that distinguish him as a Marine [Ref. 11: p. 1-1]. To accomplish this end, the Marine Corps has established two Marine Corps Recruit Depots (MCRD). One is located at Parris Island, South Carolina (MCRD Parris Island), and the other at San Diego, California (MCRD San Diego). Generally speaking, those personnel recruited east of the Mississippi River will be trained at the MCRD, Parris Island and those recruited west of the Mississippi at the MCRD, San Diego. At both locations there has been established a professional cadre of training personnel whose sole mission is to accomplish the aforementioned goal.

B. GUIDELINES FOR RECRUIT TRAINING

Recruit training is governed by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Male Recruit Training. The SOP is the guide for Marines and other personnel who come into contact with recruits. It outlines the specific duties and responsibilities of all members of the recruit training team. The SOP also acts as the "Bible" for the handling of recruits and the problems that may arise in the course of the training cycle. It clearly delineates those actions which are forbidden and places responsibility for the policing of such actions upon all concerned with the training of recruits. It is, in fact, the Commanding General's policy on recruit training. The SOP, or its associate publications, also outline the daily routine and concepts of training that apply in this case.

All personnel who are assigned duties that bring them into contact with recruits are required to pass a test on the SOP every six months. Failure to pass this test could result in removal from the assigned position until one successfully passes the test, or another disposition is decided.

C. ORGANIZATION FOR RECRUIT TRAINING

The organization tasked with training future Marines is the Recruit Training Regiment (RTR). There is one RTR at each MCRD. The RTR includes not only the normal staff sections, but also those units that specialize in recruit

training. Each RTR consists of three Recruit Training Battalions (RTBn), a Support Battalion (SuptBn), and a Drill Instructor School (DI Scol). These units each have a different, but vital, role in the training of the future Marine.

1. Recruit Training Battalion Organization

The Recruit Training Battalion is made up of a headquarters element and two Recruit Training Companies (RT Co). The Recruit Training Company is further subdivided into one or more series, depending upon the recruit input load.

The series is the unit that is charged with actually performing the day-to-day tasks that are involved in the training cycle. The personnel assigned to the series are carefully screened and trained prior to assignment to such a sensitive and important position. A series consists of four platoons that follow the same daily routine, as prescribed in the training schedule. The size of each platoon varies from 50 to 90 recruits depending upon the recruit input at that time of the year.

2. Series Personnel

The Series Commander and Assistant Series Commander are the officers responsible to the Company Commander for the training, welfare and safety of the recruits under their charge. They are also accountable for the training, welfare and performance of the drill instructors assigned to the series. It is their duty to ensure that the training schedule and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Male Recruit

Training are followed. One of the series officers is required to be present at all training events that involve physical stress, physical contact or for which the recruit is graded. Such events may not proceed without the presence of the series officer or an authorized alternate officer. These officers are also charged with ensuring that all administrative and logistical functions that affect their series are properly handled.

The senior enlisted member of the series training team is the Series Chief Drill Instructor (CDI). His task is to assist the Series Commander in accomplishing the mission of producing trained Marines. The CDI also supervises the drill instructors and ensures proper coordination of their activities as they relate to recruit training.

The platoons that comprise the series are commanded by a Senior Drill Instructor (SDI). He is the most experienced drill instructor in the platoon and must be appointed to his position by the RT Company Commander. The SDI is responsible to the Series Commander for the training, welfare and progress of the recruits assigned to his platoon. He is also responsible for the training, conduct and performance of the drill instructors working as his assistants. It is the SDI who is responsible for the work schedule for the team and for the product they are striving to perfect. The SDI assures the smooth operation of the platoon as it pursues the goals of Marine Corps recruit training.

There are normally two drill instructors (DI) assigned to assist the SDI in the training of a recruit platoon. The DI takes his instructions from and is responsible to the SDI for carrying out those daily routines he may be assigned. A minimum of one DI, or the SDI, must accompany the platoon during all phases of the training schedule. Events such as physical training, close combat and all test events require the presence of two members of the platoon's drill instructor team. One member of the team will be on duty with the platoon on a 24-hour basis. This duty is rotated and performed by all members of the team as scheduled by the SDI.

All drill instructors must be qualified graduates of the Drill Instructor School.

3. Support Battalion Organization

The Support Battalion is charged with providing support activities such as food services and liaison sections which interface with those units which are not part of the RTR. The Support Battalion is also responsible for the operation of the Receiving Barracks and the Special Training Division. As such, this is one of the first RTR units with which a recruit comes in contact. It is this unit that facilitates the recruit's smooth transition from arrival to commencement of training.

a. Receiving Barracks

The Receiving Barracks is the first actual unit with which the recruit can identify. Here he undergoes the

processing steps that are necessary for him to complete prior to beginning training. It is at the Receiving Barracks that he is assigned to his platoon and meets the recruits with whom he will train. Before proceeding with training, the recruit will take tests to help determine his possible Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). He will take another physical and dental examination to ensure he is qualified to participate in the rigorous training that lies ahead. He will also begin to learn military jargon and customs.

b. Special Training Division

Those recruits who experience problems during training will likely be assigned to one of the sections of the Special Training Division (STD). The goal of the STD is to provide specialized training for those recruits who encounter physical fitness problems, medical problems, legal problems (at MCRD San Diego only), and marksmanship problems.

The Physical Conditioning Platoon (PCP) provides specialized programs for recruits who have demonstrated physical weakness, are overweight or underweight and, for that reason, are incapable of progressing normally in training. The goal of the PCP is to correct the physical deficiencies in these recruits and return them to training as soon as possible. The recruit will be assigned to a section within the PCP that contains others with problems similar to his and they will follow a regimen designed to help attain the standards necessary for them to return to the normal training

cycle. A recruit may be sent to the PCP at various stages of training. He may fail one of the fitness tests or he may be judged by his Series Commander to fail to meet Marine Corps height and weight standards. Most of the PCP assignments are made after the Initial Strength Test (IST) which is administered on the first training day. At the MCRD, Parris Island, such a recruit may rejoin his original platoon and not be delayed in graduating if he can successfully demonstrate the improvement necessary to leave the PCP and also pass the Phase I academics test prior to his original platoon having completed training day (TD)-15. At the MCRD, San Diego, such a recruit may be assigned to a recruit platoon that has completed up to TD-7 if he similarly demonstrates physical improvement and academic ability. The PCP rarely keeps a recruit longer than 45 training days since it is felt that if he does not meet the requisite standards by that time, he will not do so in any reasonable amount of time. Recruits who fall into this category are recommended for discharge.

If a recruit incurs a physical disability that is deemed to be of a temporary and curable nature by the Depot Medical Officer, he may be sent to the Medical Rehabilitation Platoon (MRP) until such time as he is once again physically able to continue training. If the disability is judged to be one that will result in a lingering side effect, the recruit will be sent before a Medical Review Board for evaluation. At the MRP, the recruit will be allowed to

participate in as much active and academic training as he is capable of performing without detriment to his eventual recovery.

Recruits who have violated an article of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), and who have been judged guilty and sentenced by Company Commander or higher level Non-Judicial Punishment (NJP) authority, will serve the term of the sentence at the Correctional Custody Platoon (CCP). The purpose of the CCP is to rehabilitate these problem recruits and to make daily observations of their progress. The recruit will be evaluated daily with regards to his attitude and future value to the service and an appropriate entry made in his file. He will be counselled on his progress or lack of progress. All efforts are made to correct the recruit's attitude and motivational problems while he is resident at the CCP. Unless the recruit has been involved in further trouble at the CCP or has been judged to be untrainable, he will return to training after the term of his sentence has been served. At the present time, only the MCRD, San Diego, operates a Correctional Custody Platoon. The MCRD at Parris Island could activate one if the RTR commanding officer so directed.

The organization responsible for recruit marksmanship training is the Weapons Training Battalion (Wpn Trng Bn). Although it does not come under the cognizance of the RTR, the Wpn Trng Bn works very closely with the RTR to ensure

that the recruit receives the highest quality marksmanship instruction possible. Should a recruit fail to qualify when his platoon is scheduled to fire for qualification, he will be assigned to the Marksmanship Training Platoon (MTP) to receive additional instructions and firing opportunities. This remedial training will take place while the recruit's platoon is on Mess and Maintenance week. A recruit may also be assigned to the MTP if he missed two or more days of pre-firing instruction, if his weapon malfunctioned during qualification or if he was judged to be deficient in general weapons and safety knowledge by the marksmanship instructors. The recruit at the MTP has one week in which to qualify. If the recruit should succeed prior to the end of the week, he will be returned to his platoon and take part in Mess and Maintenance. If he fails to qualify in the additional time allotted, an entry will be made in his permanent recruit records stating that he is unqualified with the service rifle. He will then return to his platoon to commence Phase III of recruit training. Qualification with the service rifle is one of the events which a recruit is required to pass if he wants to be assured of graduation. The requirement may be waived. At the MCRD, San Diego, the MTP is a subunit of the Wpn Trng Bn at Edson Range. At the MCRD, Parris Island, the MTP is a section of the STD.

c. Drill Instructor School

The mission of the Drill Instructor School is to train and evaluate those professional Marines who will be trusted with the task of educating and training future Marines. Due to the importance of this job and the sensitivity required to deal with such a diverse group of people as recruits, it is necessary that each potential drill instructor be thoroughly screened and tested. Candidates for the job are, for the most part, volunteers who have been recommended for this exacting duty by their previous commanding officer. They then appeared before a screening team from the DI School. If they successfully pass these phases, the candidates are ordered to one of the two DI Schools to undergo the nine-week course that will determine their suitability and aptitude for drill instructor duty. Each MCRD operates its own DI School. At the school, the candidate is once more screened and given a physical examination to determine his psychological and physical fitness for this duty.

The nine-week course not only refreshes the candidate's knowledge of general military subjects, but also introduces him to elementary individual and group psychology and dealing with problem recruits. The classes are taught by officers and staff non-commissioned officers who have many years of experience in dealing with recruits. The Staff NCO's are all drill instructors who have been selected for their expertise in the field of recruit training. The

candidates are evaluated and counselled regularly by the instructors. The school is not hesitant to drop a student who does not measure up to prescribed standards. It is, however, possible for a marginal candidate to be recycled to the next class for additional instruction.

The goal of the school is to graduate the best possible professional, who is dedicated to training the future Marines at the MCRD. There is no room for doubt when assigning a Marine to drill instructor duty. The hours are long, the daily routine exacting, and the problems complex. Patience, understanding, and outstanding leadership are demanded of each drill instructor. He will be the daily example to the recruits of all it means to be a Marine. The Commandant considers recruit training to be a vital component in the future of the Marine Corps. It is to this end that the DI Schools must be as demanding and discriminating as necessary in assessing a future drill instructor.

D. RECRUIT EVALUATION

A recruit undergoing training to become a Marine must master many subjects that were previously foreign to him. He is instructed in such diverse topics as close order drill, first aid, weapons care, cleaning, and handling, interior guard, military customs and courtesies, and history. He is under constant supervision and is permitted a minimal amount of personal time. The pressure on him to succeed in assimilating the training presented is great.

1. Performance Objectives in Recruit Training

As in all school or training endeavors, there are certain performance objectives which a recruit must meet in order to be recommended for graduation. The objectives of recruit training are:

1. Self-discipline: a state of discipline which assures respect for authority; instant, willing obedience to orders; and the self-reliance to maintain or improve those traits that will distinguish him as a Marine.
2. Military skills: The recruit will demonstrate a proficiency in the performance objectives listed in the lesson plans in each of the following areas: (a) M16A1 Rifle, (b) Customs and Courtesy, (c) First Aid, (d) Interior Guard, (e) Drill, (f) Close Combat.
3. Marksmanship: Qualify with the service rifle.
4. Physical fitness: The ability to maintain physical fitness, endurance and weight distribution. The recruit must pass the Physical Fitness Test.
5. Military bearing: The recruit will be required to properly wear and maintain the uniform and practice personal hygiene in both garrison and field environment.
6. Esprit: The recruit will demonstrate enthusiasm, devotion, pride, initiative, teamwork and a strong desire to be a United States Marine [Ref. 12: p. 10-2, 3].

a. Phase I Evaluation

In Phase I training, the evaluators concentrate on self-discipline, military skills, military bearing, physical fitness and esprit de corps. These areas are important in the first phase of training because they give a reliable measurement of the recruit's initial progress in the transformation from civilian life to the military. The recruit

is observed daily by his drill instructors. Behavior on his part that is contrary to that desired, is both noted and punished. Should the recruit continue to deviate from the desired path, he will be counselled and have an appropriate counselling entry placed in his training file. Continued unsatisfactory performance will result in more drastic action, such as recycling or evaluation for discharge. Similarly, if he performs well and is highly visible because of his performance, the recruit will be given more responsibility and a positive entry will be made in his record. The evaluation of the recruit at the end of Phase I is based upon his performance in the initial drill evaluation, the Inventory Physical Fitness Test and the Phase I academic test.

b. Phase II Evaluation

Phase II evaluation is based mainly upon self-discipline, marksmanship and esprit. It is natural, since this phase is almost exclusively devoted to rifle marksmanship, that the recruit's evaluation is almost solely based upon his rifle range performance. Self-discipline is involved because it is a vital factor in rifle qualification. Esprit is demonstrated by the recruit's eagerness to excel and in his passing this desire to his fellow trainees through help and encouragement.

c. Phase III Evaluation

In Phase III, the recruit is once again measured by the criteria from Phase I. More is expected of him by

this stage of training. Evaluation is easier since by this time the drill instructors more easily recognize each individual in the platoon. This daily observation, as well as his performance in the Phase III final events, will serve as the basis for his final evaluation scores. His contribution to the platoon's performance in final drill and the final personnel inspection, as well as his personal scores in the final Physical Fitness Test and Practical Academic Test, give the recruit's evaluators a basis for assigning his proficiency and conduct marks. A proficiency mark below 3.0 (out of a maximum mark of 5.0), or a conduct mark of 4.0 or below (out of a maximum mark of 5.0), reflects less than acceptable performance. Any such low marks must be supported by adequate and detailed entries in the recruit's evaluation folder that is maintained by the recruit's drill instructors.

d. Recruit Leadership Positions

Throughout recruit training, the drill instructors use their personal evaluations of their recruits, along with their demonstrated performance in day-to-day training to select the platoon's recruit leaders. Those positions, in order of importance and merit, are platoon guide; four squad leaders; and, in each squad, one fire-team leader for every four recruits. By no means is such an appointment permanent. The duties of the recruit leaders are limited to those administrative and supervisory tasks assigned by their drill instructors. The leaders are, however, expected

to set the example for the remainder of the platoon. Current policy allows the Series Commander to recommend 10% of the graduating recruits for promotion to Private First Class (PFC). Normally, those filling the recruit leadership positions of Platoon Guide and Squad Leader are among the nominees. It is a goal worth striving for during the training cycle.

e. Graduation Requirements

As mentioned previously, the recruit is evaluated constantly by his series training team, as well as through such indicators as tests and inspections. The basic tests that a recruit is administered are as follows: rifle qualification; the physical fitness test; the final comprehensive practical examination; and the Battalion Commander's inspection. In order to graduate from recruit training, the recruit must pass at least three out of the four listed events. The recruit must also receive a favorable recommendation as to his potential as a Marine from the Series Commander level or higher. It is possible, however, for the Commanding General of the Recruit Depot to waive any of the graduation standards.

E. TRAINING OVERVIEW

Marine Corps recruit training is the process of transforming a civilian candidate into a basically qualified Marine. The training cycle consists of 62 training days, with Sundays and holidays not being included as training days.

A typical training day begins with reveille at 0500, (0600 Sundays and holidays), and ends with taps at 2100. The hours in between these events are filled with scheduled instruction periods, meal times and commander's time. The training becomes increasingly advanced and more difficult as the training cycle progresses. The training period is subdivided into three phases; Phase I, II and III.

1. Phase I Training Overview

Phase I training is designed to introduce the recruit to the basic tools he will need as a Marine. It is designed to build up the recruit's body physically and to prepare him mentally for his future duties. He will learn basic military skills during the fifteen training days of Phase I.

The primary emphasis of the initial phase is on physical conditioning and drill. One of the first events the recruit participates in is the Initial Strength Test (IST). Should he fail to meet the minimum requirements of one pull-up, twenty-four sit-ups in a two-minute period and a ten-minute or less one-mile run, he will be assigned to the Physical Conditioning Platoon (PCP). At the MCRD, San Diego, once a recruit is dropped to the PCP due to IST failure, he will usually be reassigned to another platoon and series to begin Phase I training once he has met the minimum requirements needed to be considered physically qualified for training. It is possible, by demonstrating a group of Phase I academics and basic military skills, that the recruit can be assigned

to a platoon which has progressed to TD-7. At the MCRD, Parris Island, the recruit will return to his original platoon if he meets the requirements within ten or fifteen days (i.e. prior to the end of Phase I). It is felt that the recruit receives the same instruction in basic military subjects at the PCP (MCRD, Parris Island) as he does with his original platoon, so he need not be held back. There are about thirty hours of physical training (PT) scheduled during Phase I. The PT varies from the "Daily Seven" exercises to running the circuit course or obstacle course. Phase I Physical Training culminates with the Inventory Physical Fitness Test (IPFT) on TD-15. If the minimum requirements (three pull-ups, 35 sit-ups and completion of the three-mile run in twenty-eight minutes or less) are not met, the recruit can be assigned to the PCP.

The other major area of emphasis during this phase of training is drill. The purpose of drill is to instill discipline, teamwork and confidence. The recruit receives approximately twenty-four hours of scheduled drill and it is likely that several additional hours will be given during commander's time. Although the recruit must master all drill movements as an individual, the platoon will be graded on its drill performance as a unit at the end of the phase. This gives evaluators an insight to the training level the platoon has reached in the first fifteen training days.

Other vital topics that the recruit is introduced to during Phase I include the service rifle, history, customs and traditions, close combat, first aid and the UCMJ. The recruit receives six hours of scheduled instruction on the functioning and care of the M-16 service rifle. If he is to master Phase II, the recruit must know how to properly care for and clean his rifle. History, customs and traditions classes teach the recruit the legacy of the United States Marine Corps. It gives him a perspective of what has gone before him and what will be expected of him during his enlistment as a Marine. The value of prowess in close combat to the individual Marine is self-explanatory. As with all organizations, there are rules and regulations that must be observed. The recruit learns those rules and regulations that are pertinent to him during the UCMJ and Interior Guard (IG) classes.

In addition to these formal periods of instruction, the recruit will receive many hours of informal instruction from his Series training team. He will learn how to prepare for inspections and obtain a basic knowledge of a myriad of minor items that are essential for him to learn if he desires to be successful in recruit training.

The Series Commander can, at any point of a recruit's training cycle, put the recruit on Trial Training. This period of five to ten days is meant to impress upon the recruit that he is under obligation to respond to training and has, thus

far, not responded in an acceptable or adequate manner. The recruit will be counselled and an entry placed in his records. He will receive additional assistance from his instructors. Daily observation and record entries will be made while the recruit is on Trial Training. At the end of the trial period, the recruit is again evaluated by the Series Commander. If he has progressed satisfactorily, he will be permitted to continue training with his platoon. If his progress has been unsatisfactory, he may be recycled, reassigned or recommended for discharge, as deemed appropriate by his Series Commander.

Phase I ends on TD-15 with an academic test designed to cover all topics of instruction provided to this point.

2. Phase II Training Overview

Having completed Phase I to the satisfaction of his superiors, the recruit is ready to begin one of the most vital phases of his training. Phase II consists almost entirely of rifle marksmanship. It is during this period of twelve training days that the recruit learns how to fire his rifle effectively.

During the first week of Phase II, the emphasis is on basic marksmanship training. The recruit learns how to prepare his rifle and himself for live firing. He receives thirty-two hours of formal instruction in marksmanship without firing one round. Before he is permitted to fire his rifle, a recruit receives one week of marksmanship and safety instruction. When he finally moves to the firing line to begin

qualification, everything should be second nature to him. Of course, physical conditioning is not neglected. During Phase II, the schedule calls for sixteen hours of organized physical training or athletics to maintain and increase the level of conditioning already attained.

The second week of Phase II consists almost exclusively of qualification with the service rifle. The recruit fires for practice for four days and for qualification on the fifth day. All that has been learned and practiced for the past two weeks is put to the test on qualification day. This is one of the requirements to graduate and, obviously, very important to the recruit himself. Aside from physical fitness, it is his first chance to prove himself as an individual.

Phase II ends with a change from formal training to one week of Mess and Maintenance. The platoon either is assigned to duty in one of the recruit mess halls or duty with Base Maintenance. Here the recruit becomes aware that there is more to service life than drill, inspections and PT.

3. Phase III Training Overview

The end of Mess and Maintenance week signals the beginning of the final phase of recruit training. The recruit will now be subjected to more instruction and will be polished into a professional Marine. Phase III is a varied course of training that includes more drill, more PT, more close combat,

more history, customs and traditions, but most importantly, introduces the recruit to Individual Combat Training (ICT).

Phase III drill has the same goals as Phase I drill, but the movements taught are more advanced. The platoon, as a whole, becomes more cohesive and functions more as a unit than before. There are approximately twenty-five scheduled hours of drill in this phase.

Similarly, Phase III physical training is more of a polishing process. The recruit continues to build his strength and endurance, while at the same time growing in self-confidence through mastery of combat water survival, the confidence course and the obstacle course.

Evidence that graduation is just over the horizon is given by the number of hours spent fitting uniforms and learning the correct way to prepare and wear them. A total of twenty-seven hours are devoted to uniforms and equipment during Phase III. In this time, the recruit must become thoroughly familiar with his personal equipment and be capable of preparing himself for the final inspection. Tied in to this are the many hours of additional instruction on history, customs and courtesies given during the final phase of training. This instruction is designed to prepare the recruit for life with a Marine unit in garrison.

To introduce him to life in the field, the recruit undergoes training in Nuclear, Biological, Chemical (NBC) Warfare and Individual Combat Training (ICT). The NBC

training is very basic. Instruction is given to acquaint the recruit with the various types of chemicals he may encounter in the future. He learns how to care for and wear the chemical mask. Once the recruit has completed several hours of classroom instruction, he puts the acquired knowledge to the test with a trip to the gas chamber.

Individual Combat Training is accomplished in a bivouac environment. The recruit actually lives in the field and receives his training there. He is taught such essentials as field sanitation, camouflage, individual movement, basic rifle squad tactics, basic land navigation and other combat-related subjects. The training includes two field exercises that incorporate what has been taught. Once the ICT field phase is completed, the recruit should have a basic background in infantry tactics and field life. The recruit will have spent seven days in bivouac under conditions similar to those he would experience during a field exercise.

After the week of ICT, the recruit returns to the barracks and prepares for the final events prior to graduation. Emphasis shifts again to drill, physical conditioning, and uniforms and equipment. Rough edges are smoothed as the recruit practices for his final PFT, academic test, practical test, the final drill evaluation and the Battalion Commander's inspection. Since perfection in all areas is the goal, this phase is very intense, with close supervision, detailed instruction, and exhaustive hours of practice.

Phase III officially ends on TD-62 when the recruit graduates and becomes a United States Marine. To this point he has been referred to as many things, but never as a Marine. The new Marine is granted leave before he reports to his new duty station.

V. DATA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

A. INTRODUCTION

Chapters III and IV provided a description of the recruiting and training process as a basis for the examination of Marine Corps recruit attrition. This chapter will provide collected data related to this examination. The first section of this chapter will be devoted to a review of summary statistics obtained from the two recruit depots. The second section is an analysis of original data obtained by the authors at the recruit depots in an effort to develop a profile of Senior Drill Instructors with varying rates of recruit attrition.

B. SUMMARY STATISTICS

Within the confines of this section, summary statistics collected from the two recruit depots will be reviewed. The summary statistics were obtained by the authors and cover the period from 1 October 1981 to 31 July 1982 (the first three quarters of FY-82). The total recruit input for this period and the subsequent total recruit attrition statistics are provided in Table I.

With regard to the recruit depot statistics, it should be noted that the process of comparison of the two depots is encumbered by different reporting formats and varying interpretations of the classifications of recruit attrition.

TABLE I
TOTAL RECRUIT ATTRITION STATISTICS

	<u>Total Recruit Input</u>	<u>Total Recruit Attrition</u>	<u>Recruit Attrition as % of Recruit Input</u>
MCRD, Parris Island	18,848	2370	12.6%
MCRD, San Diego	19,174	3888	20.3%

Finally, total recruit attrition will be defined as attrition which occurs between arrival at the recruit depot and the end of the training cycle. In subsequent sections, the total recruit attrition statistics will be further divided into administrative attrition and training attrition.

1. Pre-enlistment Statistics

In Chapter III, it was noted that one of the recruiting quality control points was the initial interview and collection of applicant information by the Marine recruiter. During this interview, the applicant may divulge information which, in accordance with current directives, requires a waiver before enlistment in the Marine Corps. Pre-enlistment waiver statistics for each Recruiting Station (RS) for depot-level waivers are maintained by each of the Depots. These statistics, by RS, are shown in Appendix A. The statistics for each recruit depot are summarized in Table II.

From these statistics, it is evident that, at least at this level of the recruit process, a very significant

TABLE II
PRE-ENLISTMENT DEPOT-LEVEL WAIVER STATISTICS

	<u>No. Submitted</u>	<u>No. Approved</u>	<u>Pct. Approved</u>
MCRD, Parris Island	510	454	89.0
MCRD, San Diego	2077	1963	94.5

number of waivers are granted; indeed, the process is almost automatic.

2. Administrative Attrition

The various categories of administrative attrition are identified in Table III. The significant difference between the two recruit depots is in the category of fraudulent/erroneous enlistments. A fraudulent/erroneous enlistment occurs when an applicant withholds or falsifies (to the recruiter) information which would disqualify him from military service; or, when the recruiter has knowledge of such information, and continues to process the applicant for enlistment.

Fraudulent/erroneous enlistments are identified primarily during the Moment of Truth (MOT) process. The MOT statistics for the MCRD, San Diego, are provided in Appendix B. Summary statistics of the MOT waivers by enlistment defect category were not available for the MCRD, Parris Island, for this period. However, the statistics for the MCRD, San Diego, provide valuable information for this study.

TABLE III
ADMINISTRATIVE ATTRITION STATISTICS

	<u>Total Number</u>	<u>Pct. of Parris Island Attrition</u>
MCRD, Parris Island		
Medical	442	18.6%
Fraudulent/Erroneous		
Enlistment	209	8.8%
Misconduct	210	8.9%
Other	50	2.1%
TOTAL	<u>911</u>	<u>38.4%</u>
	<u>Total Number</u>	<u>Pct. of San Diego Attrition</u>
MCRD, San Diego		
Medical	894	23.0%
Fraudulent/Erroneous		
Enlistment	1806	46.5%
Misconduct	192	4.9%
Other	89	2.3%
TOTAL	<u>2981</u>	<u>76.7%</u>

At the MOT, 97.2% (1756/1806) of the fraudulent/erroneous enlistments for the MCRD, San Diego, are identified. A major portion of the enlistment defects identified at the MOT, and requiring subsequent waiver submissions, concern drug abuse or moral turpitude. When a waiver request for a recruit is disapproved, he is processed for a discharge from the Marine Corps. These waiver disapprovals and subsequent discharges comprise the attrition statistics for the MOT process.

At the MCRD, San Diego, drug involvement represented 49.5% (2236/4520) of the total enlistment waivers requested. Of the enlistment waiver requests disapproved, drug involvement represented 80.5% (1413/1756) of the total cases disapproved.

The other significant category of MOT waivers at MCRD, San Diego, is in the area of moral turpitude. Moral turpitude is defined as frequent involvement with police authorities. This category provided 22.8% (1029/4520) of the enlistment waivers requested. Disapproval of MOT enlistment waiver requests for moral turpitude constituted 10.5% (185/1756) of the total enlistment waiver requests disapproved.

Together, the categories of moral turpitude and drug involvement accounted for 72.3% (3265/4520) of the total number of waivers requested. Of the total enlistment waiver requests disapproved, 91.0% (1598/1756) involved these two categories.

3. Training Attrition

As described in Chapter IV, the training process is an exacting one, which challenges the intellectual, psychological, and physical abilities of a recruit. Obviously, all recruits who survive the recruitment screening process do not graduate from recruit training. Summary statistics for recruits identified as training failures are provided in Table IV for each of the recruit depots. It should be noted

TABLE IV
TRAINING FAILURE STATISTICS

	<u>Total # Training Failures</u>	<u>Training Failures as % of Total Recruit Attrition*</u>
MCRD, Parris Island	1457	61.6%
MCRD, San Diego	907	23.3%

that statistics of training failures maintained by the recruit depots are not further identified as to cause of failure.

Thus, there is a significant difference (38.3%) between the two depots in regards to training attrition as a percent of total attrition.

C. SENIOR DRILL INSTRUCTOR PROFILE

1. Background

This study utilized data obtained by the authors at the Marine Corps Recruit Depots. Data on recruit attrition, from their original platoons, were obtained by scanning the Series Graduation Packages (SGP) kept at the Recruit Training Battalions. Although each RT Bn was using similar forms for reporting the final series training data, the forms were often only partially complete.

* This percentage was derived as follows:
MCRD, Parris Island 1459/2370 = 61.6%
MCRD, San Diego 907/3888 = 23.3%

Each form contained data on the four platoons in the series. Data available, and gathered, included original platoon strength at pick-up, originals dropped during the training cycle, the graduation date and the name of the Senior Drill Instructor. In many cases, the graduation date and/or the name of the SDI had been omitted.

Since the RT Bn seldom used this information after the series outposted, the SGP's for many series were either missing or temporarily being used by other organizations and were not available to the authors.

The sample size is relatively small for drill instructors and their associated platoon attrition. For both MCRDs, the total number of SDIs for whom platoon data were available, for the period of June 1981-June 1982, numbered 540. The authors then attempted to identify SDIs who graduated three or more platoons. This minimum of three observations was felt necessary to provide some stability in the percentages. It would have been preferable to have had more platoon attrition data per SDI but such data were not available.

The authors were able to identify a total of 62 SDIs who had graduated three or more platoons within the scanned time frame. Of these, the authors were able to find background data on 21 SDIs and partial data (number of months as DI and MOS) on 6 more. The background data gathered included

pay grade, years of service, age, months as DI, high school graduate, marital status, and standing in DI School class.

The most frequent reason for the lack of SDI data, is SDI turnover. The normal tour as a DI is two years, with a possibility of extension to three years. Once graduated from DI School, each DI must serve as a junior DI for at least one platoon before he is eligible to become a senior DI. Usually, a DI will serve as junior for several platoons before his RT Company Commander appoints him to fill a SDI vacancy. This often results in the individual completing his DI tour before he has graduated more than three platoons as SDI.

The small sample size for which data were available limits the statistical analyses that can be conducted. However, the authors did conduct some data analyses.

The authors used the complete sample size of 540 SDIs to compare the attrition of the MCRDs, to compare RT Battalions at each MCRD, to compare average attrition by SDI pay grade, and by SDI Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), although the sample size for each MOS was very small. More detailed data, available for only 21 SDIs, were used to attempt to construct a profile of high and low attrition SDIs. When possible, the 6 SDIs on whom only limited data were available were incorporated into the profile construction attempt.

The methods used to analyze the data were simple averaging and regression analysis. Simple averaging was used to compare the MCRDs, RT Battalions and to describe differences in attrition rates between pay grades. Regression analysis, bivariate and multiple, was used to determine which of the factors played a significant role in a SDI's attrition. Since there was such a small volume of data, all calculations were done utilizing the TI-59 computer.

The data analysis will be presented beginning with the overall average attrition, followed by a breakdown of average attrition by MCRD, Battalion within each MCRD, by SDI pay grade at each MCRD and will continue with a general synopsis of SDI background data. The analysis will then proceed into regression analysis.

2. Data Analysis

a. General Data Analysis Using Averaging

Analysis of the general background data gathered on the SDIs yielded the following information:

1. Pay Grade Breakdown (n=27):

E-7	n=11
E-6	n=15
E-5	n=1

2. Average age (n=21): 27.9 years

3. Average years of service (n=21): 8.9 years

4. Average months of service as DI (n=27): 24.3 months

5. Married (n=21): 20 of 21

6. High school graduates (n=21): 18 of 21

7. DI School class standing (n=12):

<u>Standing</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Avg. Recruit Attrition from SDI's Platoon</u>
top 25%	6	25.1%
second 25%	5	24.5%
bottom 50%	1	20.2%

8. MOS breakdown (n=27)

<u>MOS</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Avg. Recruit Attrition from SDI's Platoon</u>
0100	1	14.2%
0300	6	18.8%
1300	1	19.6%
1800	1	28.7%
2100	1	21.5%
2500	1	25.3%
3000	4	27.3%
3100	1	21.2%
3500	3	21.8%
4600	1	29.0%
5800	3	31.1%
6000	2	29.9%
6100	2	24.2%

The average SDI attrition at MCRD, Parris Island,
for the 292 samples found, was 24.3% of original recruits.
The sample at MCRD, San Diego, numbering 248 SDIs, averaged

an attrition rate of 22.3% of original recruits. When accumulated by RT Battalion at each MCRD, the results were as shown in Table V.

TABLE V
ATTRITION RATES FROM RECRUIT BATTALIONS

<u>Parris Island (N=292) SDIs</u>		<u>San Diego (N=248) SDIs</u>
1st RT Bn	26.6%	21.8%
2nd RT Bn	21.8%	24.3%
3rd RT Bn	<u>24.5%</u>	<u>20.9%</u>
Average	24.3%	22.3%

The same analysis performed only for those SDIs who had graduated three or more platoons, showed those at MCRD, Parris Island, to average 21.0% attrition and those at MCRD, San Diego, to average 25.3%. When averaged by RT Battalion, the results are as shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI
AVERAGE RECRUIT PLATOON ATTRITION RATES FOR SDIs WHO HAD GRADUATED THREE OR MORE PLATOONS

<u>Parris Island (N=15) SDIs</u>		<u>San Diego (N=12) SDIs</u>
1st RT Bn	23.8%	24.3%
2nd RT Bn	14.8%	26.2%
3rd RT Bn	<u>24.3%</u>	<u>no data found for SDIs</u>
Average	21.0%	25.3%

The data were then analyzed by pay grade, and pay grade of location. Overall, the recruit platoon attrition for SDIs in pay grade E-7 averaged 26.0%, while those in pay grade E-6 averaged 24.1% attrition. For those on whom sufficient background data were available, E-7 SDIs recruit platoon attrition rates averaged 27.85% and E-6 SDIs 22.7%. The same data were used for analysis of pay grade by location with results as shown in Table VII.

TABLE VII
AVERAGE RECRUIT PLATOON ATTRITION RATES
FOR PAY GRADE BY LOCATION

MCRD Parris Island

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Avg. Recruit Attrition from SDI's Platoon</u>
E-6 (no data)	252	24.2%
E-7 (no data)	40	26.1%
E-6 (no data)	7	22.5%
E-7 (no data)	8	23.5%

MCRD San Diego (data unavailable for 32 SDIs)

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Avg. Recruit Attrition from SDI's Platoon</u>
E-6 (no data)	200	23.9%
E-7 (no data)	16	25.9%
E-6 (data)	8	22.9%
E-7 (data)	3	32.1%

SDIs who were high school graduates (n=18), had an average recruit platoon attrition rate of 24.8%. Non-high school graduates SDIs (n=3), had an average recruit platoon attrition rate of 19.2%. The average recruit platoon attrition rate for married SDIs (n=20), was 24.1%.

b. Regression Analysis

Simple regression analysis was performed utilizing the data available. Recruit attrition statistics were analyzed using rank, number of years of service, months as DI, age, and standing in DI School class (as a percentage) as regressors. The results obtained are given in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII
BIVARIATE REGRESSION RESULTS

The dependent variable was Marine recruit platoon attrition.

<u>Predictor (x)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>Bivariate Corr.Coeff.</u>
Rank of SDI	27	.508	.249	.070*
Yrs Service of SDI	21	2.850	7.710	.089*
Age of SDI	21	3.920	10.320	.094*
Months as DI	27	6.985	46.987	.041*
DI School Standing	12	21.060	406.667	.139*

*Not statistically significant at $p \leq .05$.

Regression using high school graduate/non-high school graduate and married/unmarried data was not done because of the small number of samples in these categories.

Multiple regression (two predictor variable) was then performed using years of service and age, years of service and months as DI and, finally, age and months as DI as regressors. The results are shown in Table IX.

TABLE IX
MULTIPLE REGRESSION RESULTS

The dependent variable was Marine recruit attrition.

<u>Predictors</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Regression Constant</u>	<u>Regression Coefficients</u>	<u>Multiple Correlation Coefficient</u>
Yrs of Svc and Age	21	.1168	.0027 .0035	.09796*
Yrs of Svc and MOS as DI	21	.2268	.0062 -.0018	.13592*
Age and MOS as DI	21	.1305	.0059 -.0017	.13735*

*Not statistically significant at $p \leq .05$.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

With a rate (from 1 October 1981-31 July 1982) of 16.5% (6258/38,022) attrition, Marine Corps male recruit attrition continues to be a problem. When this recruit attrition is measured in terms of dollars (approximately \$27,057,590*), the current attrition problem should be viewed as even more significant.

To provide the reader with a basic understanding of recruit attrition, and to aid our analysis, we presented a description of both the recruiting and training process. Within the recruiting process, we identified three major quality control points. We believe these quality control points to be valid mechanisms which provide a reliable screening process of applicants. In the course of our study, we discovered no glaring weaknesses within the recruitment process, as presently constituted. However, we feel that there is a key area over which the Recruiting Service has

*This figure was calculated as follows:
6258 (total attrites) X \$2166 = \$13,554,828
2366 (train failures) X \$5707 = 13,502,762
\$27,057,590

Dollar values for Recruiting (\$2166) and Training (\$5707) are contained on page 5 of the First Marine Corps District Study cited in the references.

little or no control, and which impacts significantly on recruit attrition. That area is recruiter access to school and police records.

Currently, a recruiter's access to an applicant's school or police records (if applicable) may be limited by local or state laws. This places the recruiter in the position of accepting, without being able to verify, an applicant's statement that he has encountered no school disciplinary problems or involvement with police authorities. As presented in Chapter V, frequent police involvement (moral turpitude) or drug involvement accounted for 91.0% (MCRD, San Diego only) of the waivers disapproved. We contend that if recruiters had access to an applicant's school or police records, applicants who were not eligible for enlistment because of previous offenses, would be identified earlier in the recruitment process, with a resultant savings in time and money.

Because recruiter access to school and police records is governed by a myriad of state and/or local laws, we feel that Congressional legislation is necessary to provide legal access for military recruiters to screen an applicant's school or police records for enlistment defects. Prior to allowing a recruiter access to these records, an applicant would be required to sign a statement authorizing this

specific access. An applicant would have the right to refuse such an inquiry, but he would not then be eligible for enlistment.

The authors also found that the training process, as presently organized and implemented, provides an adequate system for identifying recruits who do not possess the intellectual, psychological, or physical abilities to complete recruit training. We do contend that the Senior Drill Instructor plays a significant role in recruit attrition occurring as a result of training failure. Our analysis of the Senior Drill Instructors was difficult to construct because of a lack of data. However, we think that the development of a high attrition Senior Drill Instructor profile, as well as a low attrition Senior Drill Instructor profile is a valid concept, which can yield valuable information if the necessary data is available.

We could not identify any explanation (which we could verify) for the significant difference between the recruit depots in the fraudulent/erroneous enlistment category. Our interviews with recruiting personnel at both recruit depots indicated that part of this variance could be attributed to the differences between the depots in defining this category. Based on our observation of the MOT process at both recruit depots, another possible explanation is a different emphasis by each depot on identifying enlistment defects at the MOT.

Finally, this variance may be explained by the fact that fraudulent/erroneous enlistments are identified earlier in the recruitment process by recruiters for one recruit depot as opposed to the recruiters for the other depot.

Our analysis of recruit attrition was directly affected by the various statistical data maintained by the recruit depots. In many cases, it was difficult to make valid comparisons between the recruit depots because of the use of different definitions of enlistment defect categories and a variety of reporting formats.

Finally, we realize that there is no magic formula or easy answer to the problem of recruit attrition. We do not think that artificial attrition rate limits should be established for the recruit depots. Such a limitation undermines the entire process of identifying recruits not suitable for military service. We do, however, offer some recommendations for future analysis or action in the following section.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. An effort should be initiated to establish Congressional legislation to allow military recruiters access to school and police records of applicants for military service. In consonance with this effort, further study should be initiated which identifies, in detail, the costs associated with the inability of the recruiter to review these records.
2. Uniform formats for attrition data and definitions of enlistment defect categories should be established for use by each of the recruit depots.
3. Statistics on training failures should be expanded to further categorize the cause of the training failure (physical fitness, psychological, rifle qualification,

etc.). Again, the maintenance of this statistical information should be uniform for both recruit depots.

4. A detailed study should be initiated to determine if there is any correlation between the attrition experienced by platoons trained by the Senior Drill Instructor and a profile of his personal characteristics. Such a study should be extended over a minimum of two years and provide access to personal data of the drill instructor and the recruit graduation packages.
5. A study should be conducted to ascertain whether the Marines being charged with drug and/or serious disciplinary offenses are the same ones who received a waiver for drug abuse and/or legal problems as a recruit. Such a study would verify the present waiver screening process and offer insights to its continuation or the need for modification.

APPENDIX A
PRE-ENLISTMENT DEPOT-LEVEL WAIVER

	<u>No. Submit</u>	<u>No. Approve</u>	<u>Pct. Approve</u>
A. FIRST MARINE CORPS DISTRICT			
Albany, NY	9	8	88.9%
Boston, MA	18	12	66.7%
Buffalo, NY	23	19	82.6%
Hartford, CT	17	15	88.2%
Long Island, NY	17	16	94.1%
Manchester, NH	19	18	94.7%
Newark, NJ	17	15	88.2%
New York, NY	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>66.7%</u>
Subtotal	123	105	85.4%
B. FOURTH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT			
Baltimore, MD	52	50	96.2%
Cincinnati, OH	31	30	96.8%
Cleveland, OH	22	20	90.9%
Harrisburg, PA	13	13	100.0%
Louisville, KY	23	22	95.7%
Philadelphia, PA	41	38	92.7%
Pittsburgh, PA	18	16	88.9%
Richmond, VA	17	16	94.1%
So. Charleston, W VA	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Subtotal	235	223	94.9%

C. SIXTH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT

Birmingham, AL	15	9	60.0%
Orlando, FL	24	23	95.8%
Macon, GA	54	41	75.9%
Nashville, TN	15	13	86.7%
Raleigh, NC	<u>44</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>90.9%</u>
Subtotal	152	126	82.9%
East Coast Total	<u>510</u>	<u>454</u>	<u>89.0%</u>

D. EIGHTH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT

Albuquerque, NM	49	48	98.0%
Dallas, TX	70	66	94.3%
Denver, CO	102	96	94.1%
Houston, TX	48	46	95.8%
Kansas City, MO	78	75	96.2%
Little Rock, AK	69	66	95.7%
New Orleans, LA	81	77	95.1%
Oklahoma City, OK	78	67	85.9%
Omaha, NB	72	66	91.7%
San Antonio, TX	<u>57</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>98.2%</u>
Subtotal	704	663	94.2%

E. NINTH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT

Chicago, IL	65	61	93.8%
Des Moines, IA	70	63	90.0%
Detroit, MI	111	109	98.2%

Indianapolis, IN	82	79	96.3%
Lansing, MI	74	71	95.9%
Minneapolis, MN	68	67	98.5%
Milwaukee, WI	87	81	93.1%
St. Louis, MO	<u>88</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>96.6%</u>
Subtotal	645	616	95.5%

F. TWELFTH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT

Los Angeles, CA	177	164	92.7%
Phoenix, AZ	81	79	97.5%
Portland, OR	81	78	96.3%
Sacramento, CA	69	64	92.8%
San Diego, CA	83	75	90.4%
San Francisco, CA	162	151	93.2%
Seattle, WA	<u>75</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>97.3%</u>
Subtotal	728	684	94.0%

West Coast Total	<u>2077</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>94.5%</u>
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APPENDIX B
MOMENT OF TRUTH WAIVERS

A. MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT, SAN DIEGO

	<u>No. Submit</u>	<u>No. Disapprove</u>	<u>Pct. Disapprove</u>
Medical	53	23	43.4%
Moral Turpitude	1029	185	18.0%
Drugs	2236	1413	63.2%
Alcohol	162	16	9.9%
Traffic	767	2	.3%
Prior Service	95	78	82.1%
Dependents	138	16	11.6%
Age	3	2	66.7%
Other	<u>37</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>56.8%</u>
Total	4520	1756	38.8%

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